



Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Bending, Twisting, Reaching

Injuries from manual material handling, especially strains and sprains of the back, arms and shoulders account for one-third of all workplace accidents. In many types of operations this is the source of more than 75% of injuries. The major cause of these injuries is unnecessary or excessive body motions while bending, twisting and reaching. In many cases, these strains and sprains can be easily prevented. The following are a few techniques for you to consider.

Bending:



Many work tasks involve unnecessary bending, which results from the improper design of the work station, a poor job layout. The work station or area should be designed so the work is performed in the mid-range of the body, i.e., from waist to shoulder height within a 16" semicircle in front of the body.

Often this can be accomplished simply by placing a table under the material being worked on, raising the work level so it can be performed in an upright position.

Twisting And Reaching:

Elimination of unnecessary twisting or reaching can also be accomplished by finding ways to keep the work or materials in the mid-range. For example, while changing a light bulb or working above floor level, place the ladder so that the task will be performed in *front* of the body instead of twisting to the side. This demonstrates how easy it can be to minimize or eliminate many twisting or reaching tasks.

Providing adequate work space so the *whole body* can turn, instead of just the upper torso, is another good technique. Turning the whole body is safest for the back.